

POSTER GRAPHICS

art
advertizing
politics

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mary lohan 3rd year fine arts '76

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INTRODUCTION:

Today posters are an inherent part of the decor of modern cities, and of highways as the nature-effacing links between cities. One could describe the poster as a large announcement, with a pictorial element, usually displayed on a wall or billboard, to the general or specific public. The visual element of the poster supplies the initial impetus and the supplementary verbal message amplifies the pictorial theme. Throughout the years posters have become visually more aggressive in competing with other posters, and with the mechanized speed of modern life.

The advent of the poster presupposes the specific historic conditions of modern capitalism. Sociologically the advent of the poster reflects the development of an industrialised economy, whose goal is ever increasing mass-consumption. Alois Senefelder invented the process of lithography in 1798. His methods were perfected later, and by 1848 it was possible to print sheets at the rate of 10,000 an hour. The earliest posters all had a specific function; to encourage a growing proportion of the population to spend money on soft consumer goods, entertainments, and the arts.

Compared with the other new art forms that arose towards the end of the last century, posters achieved the status of "art" more rapidly than most. The reason for that is the number of distinguished artists who turned to the poster form - CHERET, TOULOUSE-LAUTREC, MUCHA, BEARDSLEY etc. A longer resistance of the poster as an art form would probably have been inspired less by its 'impure origins' in commerce than by its essential dependance on the process of technological duplication. Yet it is precisely this dependance which makes the poster a distinctly modern art form. Painting and Sculpture, the traditional shapes of the visual arts have had their meaning and aura profoundly altered when they entered the age of mechanical reproduction. But the poster (like still photography and the cinema) carries no history from the pre-modern world: it could exist only in the era of mechanical duplication. Unlike a painting, a poster was never meant to exist as a unique object. Reproducing a poster does not make a second generation object, one aesthetically inferior to the original - from its conception the poster was designed to exist in multiples.

In its short life, the poster has had an indelible effect on the history of modern society.

In the world of art, posters have never won the status of a major art form. Poster-making is usually labelled an 'applied' art. This is assumed because poster-making is connected with areas of commercial activities as opposed to the fine arts (painting and sculpture) whose supposed aim, is the free expression of the artist's individuality. This concept is unhistorical, because it is only since the nineteenth century that the artist has generally been understood to have been working to express himself for 'arts sake'. The world of art itself has to-day become a business corporation. The gathering of large amounts of art-works is in the hands of the rich and powerful. Love of aestheticism and culture to-day, infers profits and speculation and upholds the elitist right of the rich to the benefits accruing from the arts. As soon as the poster became recognised as an art form, amassing private collections became popular, signed first editions were sought after and huge values were placed on first copies.

Looking back it is easy to recognize the effects and influences of the poster on art movements, and the uses of the arts in poster design.

Jules Cheret the first of the great poster makers designed over a thousand posters. To-day, we would probably find Cheret's work more representative of the end of a great European tradition rather than the start of new developments. At the time however, the innovations in his work would have seemed startling. In his early work, the striking use of black as a colour, and the interlocking black shapes, provided a break with traditional interpretation of solid form, which artists such as TOULOUSE-LAUTREC and BONNARD were to develop even further.

The poster at this time was to have great impetus as a vehicle, for breaking with the old traditions of academic naturalism. Art Nouveau included in it, facets of life, from painting and sculpture to architecture, furniture ect., not excluding the poster. One of the significant elements of Art Nouveau design were the shapes derived from the Japanese prints, which appeared in Paris on the wrapping paper of articles from the east. The famous prints of artists such as HIROSHIGE, HOKUSAI and UTAMARO, that described the daily life of the street, had a direct influence on the European poster, and a profound effect on pictorial advertising. Art Nouveau, anticipated further developments in the Renaissance choked France at the time.

The most significant impact of the poster, or the concept of reproduction on the field of art, was in the popular art movement of the sixties. The Pop Art movement sprung out of the artists' fascination, in America, in the late fifties of the superreal world which was being created around him. The consumer rat race was

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going strong - giant size billboards displaying blown up images, with detached realism were creating new urban facades. At the same time groups of artists were becoming disillusioned with the fine art scene. Creating single unique pieces of art, to be sold to elitist groups of the middle classes seemed pointless. These artists felt the need for a vehicle of communication which would break through the barriers of 'high art' and find sympathy with the masses. In trying to succeed with this ambition, artists like Warhol and Lichtenstein surrendered to the principles of anonymous mass reproduction and documented their closeness to the image world of the mass media. However in due course, the artists, and their work, were snapped up by the rich and by the institutions that they controlled. The intention no longer mattered. It turned out that the multiple idea, was merely another packaging concept, that exploited the limited edition, signed investment - opportunity impulses that are characteristic in the business world of art.

Pop art however did effect the image of the advertising poster. Cartoon type advertising became popular in the United States only after Lichtenstein had made them the main theme of his work. The mouth canvasses of Wesselman, themselves part of the lipstick and toothpaste advertising tradition, had a visible effect on such ads. While advertisements of an earlier period showed the human being as belonging to those lips and teeth, post Wesselmann ads. frequently blow up the mouth, and show nothing but the mouth.

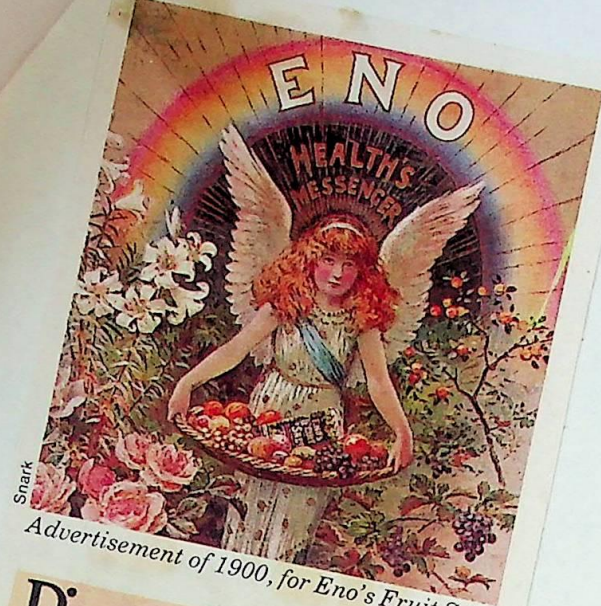
The era of the sixties, bringing with it the revolt by young people all over the world, for freedom, and escape from the shackles of the materialist society, created a craze for posters. These posters could be described as popular art material as they did not depict objects to sell but were rather commodities in themselves. The Hippy poster is, generally speaking, bright and slick. Some methods used by designers in the 1890's have been revived - but they have been exaggerated and their effect extended. All styles of art can be seen in these posters - Art Nouveau, surrealism, juxtaposed with new methods of trendy photography, creating new illusory worlds is assured to the freaked out druggies, in search for peace - TRUTH and LOVE.

As early as 1916-17 poster advertising in the nature of the popular idiom was having a significant effect on the arts. Marcel Duchamp used a banal popular poster image, in a number of his works. The futurists and dadaists both used pictorial quotations from the world of the popular advertisement. Leger also derived his use of the single isolated object, from typical layout advertising. In 1924 STUART DAVIS made a painting representing an advertising toothpaste poster design, referring to a more contemporary form of advertising. The real significant connection between posters and fine art came with the new American painting, and in particular with the size and flatness of these giant murals. Willem de Kooning used pages of newspaper to remove

surface areas of paint, and he left the imprint of the newspaper images on his work. The banality of those pathetic details of mass media material (small ads. etc.) intrigued de Kooning. He was also fascinated by the dummies in shop windows, and the characters from comic-strips and billboards, made by unknown designers without artistic pretensions. In England Richard Smith explored the immense size of beer glasses and cigarette packets in his paintings, and later on introduced actual mass media material onto his canvasses.

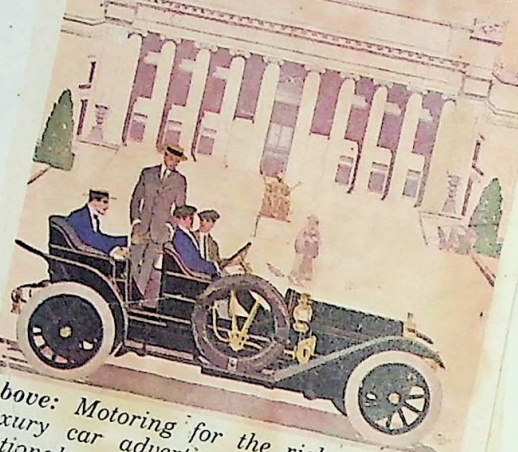
The history of virtually all the ostensible revolutionary movements in art and culture to have arisen in non or pre-revolutionary societies is hardly encouraging. The fate of the Bauhaus movement is only one example, among many of how revolutionary forms of culture arising within bourgeois society are first attacked, then neutralized, and finally absorbed into that society. Capitalism transforms all objects, including art into commodities. And the poster is hardly exempt from this iron rule of co-option. At the present time, poster art is in a period of renaissance. Posters have come to be regarded as mysterious cultural objects. In recent years poster images have come to be more and more frequently incorporated within other arts. The eye of film makers has turned more and more to posters. They appear as key objects in almost all Godard's films. In *Midnight Cowboy*, John Schlesinger showed a startling image of urban New York, and in *Zabriskie Point*, Michelangelo Antonioni presented, in clean cut focus the vivid presence of the art forms of consumer society. The current poster renaissance derives its strength less from any more original type of production, or more intensive public use of posters, than from the astonishing surge of interest in collecting posters - in domesticating them.

This current interest differs in several ways from the first wave of poster collecting, which started two decades after posters began to appear. First it is simply on a much larger scale, as befits a later, more advanced stage in the era of mechanical reproduction. Poster collecting in the 1890's may have been fashionable, but it is hardly as it is to-day, a mass addiction. Second, a much broader range of posters is being collected. The collections of the 1890's tended to be from the collectors own country. Recent poster collections tend to be ostentatiously international. It is hardly accidental that the beginning of the craze for collecting posters in the mid 1950's coincides with the rising tide of post-war American tourism in Europe, which has now made regular trips across the Atlantic as banal a prerogative of middle-class life, as vacations at country seaside resorts had been in an earlier age. This archetypal public object, once collected by connoisseurs has now become a standard, private, object, in the living-rooms, bedrooms, bathrooms and kitchens of the young American and European bourgeoisie. In such collections the poster is not simply as it once was - a new, exotic kind of art object. It has more special functions. Posters furnish a portable image of the world. Since what the poster illustrates is often not part of his personal history, or experience, the collection, instead substitutes experience and



Advertisement of 1900, for Eno's Fruit Salts

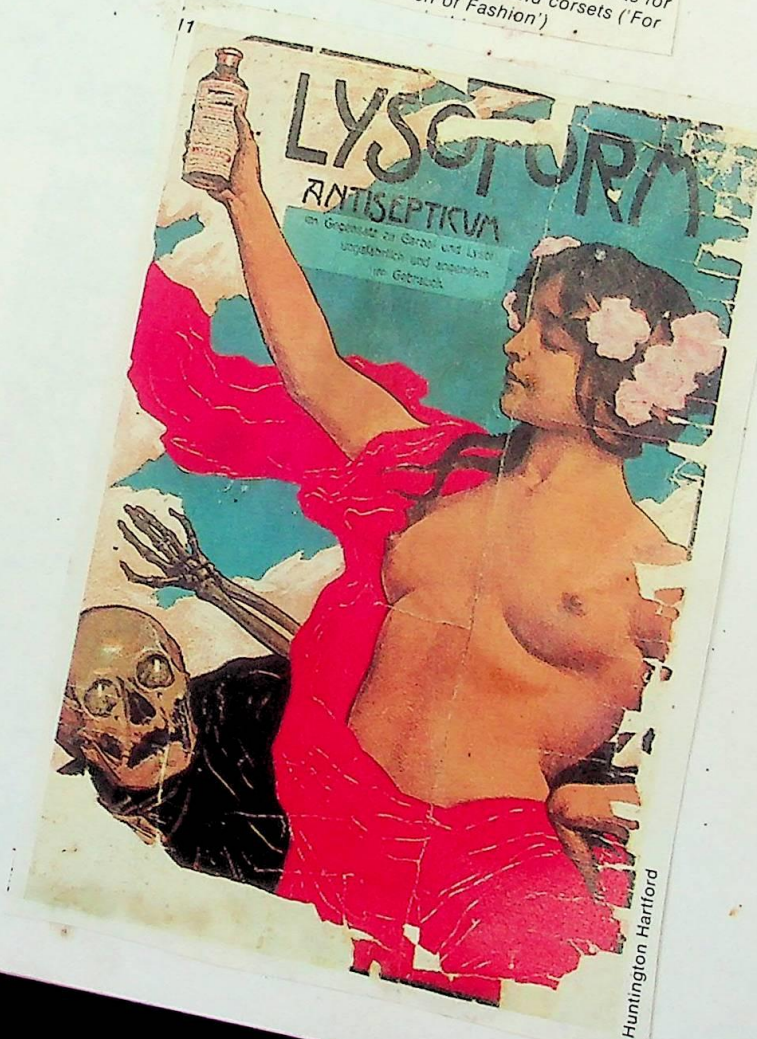
Pierce Arrow



Above: Motoring for the rich. American luxury car advertisement. Below: International trade. Poster for shipping line



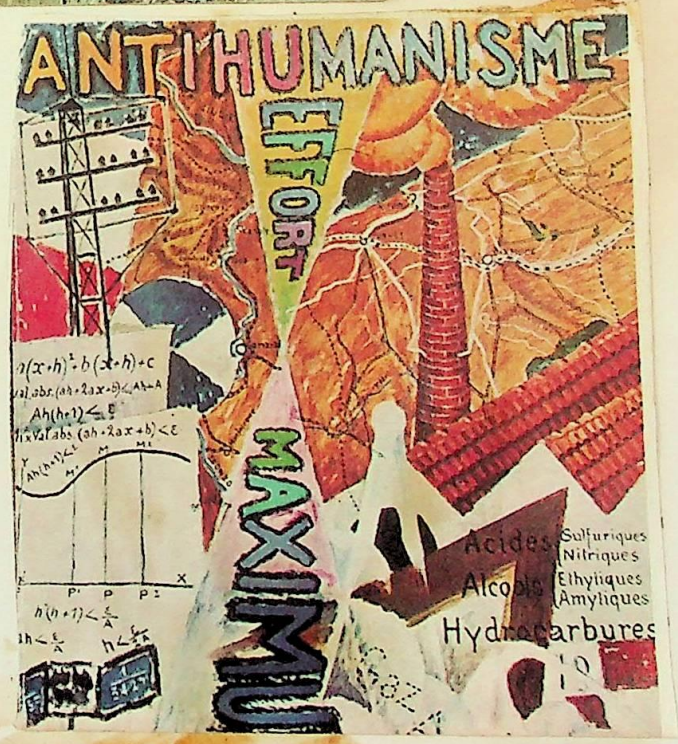
7 United States; crowning the numerous posters for music-hall performances are advertisements for Turkish cigarettes, and corsets ('For the Women of Fashion')





Private Collection, Milan

FUTURIST PAINTINGS.



HARPER'S



34 EDWARD PENFIELD
Design for Harper's
(March) 1894

LIPPINCOTT'S



35 WILL CARQUEVILLE
Lippincott's



*14 ALPHONSE MUCHA Gismonda 1894

becomes a set of imaginary experiences. As a cultural trophy, the display of a poster in one's private space is, at the very least, a clear means of self-identification, to visitors, by which the various members of a cultural subgroup announce themselves to each other.

Even in the relatively brief history of the modern revival of poster collecting, the choice of the kind of posters to hand, is subject to marked changes in fashion. The bullfight poster, and posters of Paris art exhibitions, almost ubiquitous a decade ago, evidence rear-guard taste now. Some time ago these were overtaken by Mucha posters, and by old movie posters. Then came the vogue posters, advertising the exhibitions of American artists e.g. the famous posters of WARHOL, JOHNS, RAUCHENBERG, and LICHENSTEIN shows. After that came the rock ballroom posters, which were succeeded by the head posters, for looking at when stoned. Starting in the 1960's, a major part of collecting interest has shifted to radical political posters. It seems odd at first, that the radical political poster has such apparently diverse uses. It appeals to the populations of economically underdeveloped, ex-colonial societies, many of whom can barely read. It also appeals to the most literate young people in the most advanced industrial nations, mainly students.

Posters still carry some residual traces of their origin in and influence by, high arts such as painting. But the big blow up photographs of famous people that are now being hung up, poster fashion, are about as neutral and impersonal as any image can be. The contemporary style of collecting posters in the form of icons, represent many kinds of admirations. These juxtapositions, whereby Ho Chi Minh; is in the bedroom, and Bogart in the bedroom, while W.C. Fields hangs next to Marx over the dining room table, produce a kind of moral vertigo. Such morally startling collages indicate a very particular way of viewing the world, now endemic among the educated young bourgeoisie of America and Western Europe, that is one part sentimentality, one part irony and one part detachment.

ADVERTISING:

It is difficult to describe the area of poster advertising as being separate from the art poster. The two are very much interrelated. Graphic artists have achieved considerable status as

'artists' in the field of advertising. One could say that the poster was born out of the aestheticizing impulse. It aimed to make of selling something 'beautiful'. Whatever its origins in selling specific products and performances, the poster has tended to develop an independent existence as a major element in the public decor of modern cities. Even when a product, service, spectacle or institution is named, the ultimate function of the poster may be purely decorative.

The origins of the poster were founded in commerce. Typical of the original functions of the poster are the subjects of Jules Cheret, which range from cabarets, music halls, dance halls and operas, to oil lamps, apertifs and cigarette papers. The first important English poster makers, the Begarstuffs - who began in the early 1890's, and were boldly derivative of the French poster makers - also mostly advertised soft goods and the theatre. In America, the first distinguished poster work was done for magazines. Will Bradley, Louis Rhead, Edward Penfield and Masefield Parrish, were employed by such magazines as Harpers, Century, Lippencotts and Scribners to design a different cover for each issue: These cover designs were then reproduced as posters to sell the magazines to the expanding middle-class reading public. During this period the streets of Paris and London became an outdoor gallery, with new posters appearing every day. Posters appeared with little or even no apparent mercantile context. However this state of affairs was soon to end as private speculators soon recognised the potential effect of advertising on the growing middle class consumer society. What keeps posters multiplying to-day is their commercial utility in selling particular products, and beyond that, in perpetuating a climate in which it is normative to buy. Since the economy's health depends on steadily encroaching upon whatever limits peoples habits of consumption, there can be no limit to the effort, to saturate public space with advertising. Also no limit to the extremes of portraying objects in order to make the consumer buy.

Commercial enterprises in the United States, especially made use of realism, with the help of new developments in photography. In the U.S. the decorative arts of Paris, or movements like De Stijl and constructivism, were not close enough geographically or artistically to provide sufficient influence. The realistic image was given new dimensions by the large billboard - a new reality was achieved by the simple process of enlargement. An element of fantasy is introduced by banal giant size images, representing the perfect image, of the ideal world of the successful citizen - a world that one could buy and an environment that private enterprise was willing to create in the interests of larger profits.

Most commercial posters rely on the image, rather than the word. The aim of an effective advertising poster is the stimulation and simulation of tastes and appetites. Most commonly, a thing, or an idea, is attached to the emblematic image of a person. In commercial advertising, the paradigm occurs as early as Cheret. He designed most of his posters around the image of the pretty



212 Scale in advertising in the United States 1967. (Photo: David Hockney)



57 LOREN REHBOCK *Peace* 1967



58 PETER MAX *Love* 1967

MEET -

SADIE THOMPSON



YOU MEN!
YOU'RE ALL
ALIKE....
PIGS
I WOULDN'T
TRUST ANY
OF YOU !!!

A WOMAN
WITHOUT
SHAME

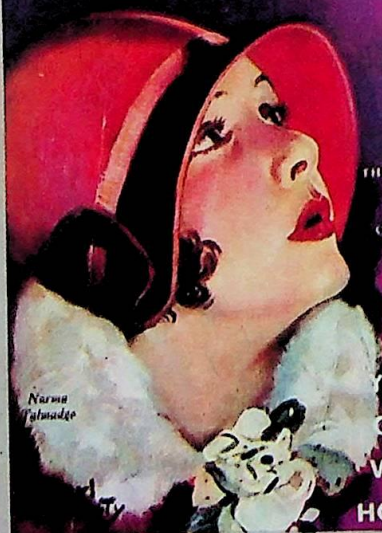
A WOMAN
WITHOUT
A SOUL



Joan **CRAWFORD**
"RAIN"
WALTER HUSTON
with Guy Kibbee
William Gargan

The National Guide to Motion Pictures
PHOTOPLAY

DECEMBER
25 CENTS



THE MICROPHONE -
THE TERROR
OF THE STUDIOS

YOU CAN'T
GET AWAY
WITH IT IN
HOLLYWOOD

The Smart Screen Magazine
SCREENLAND

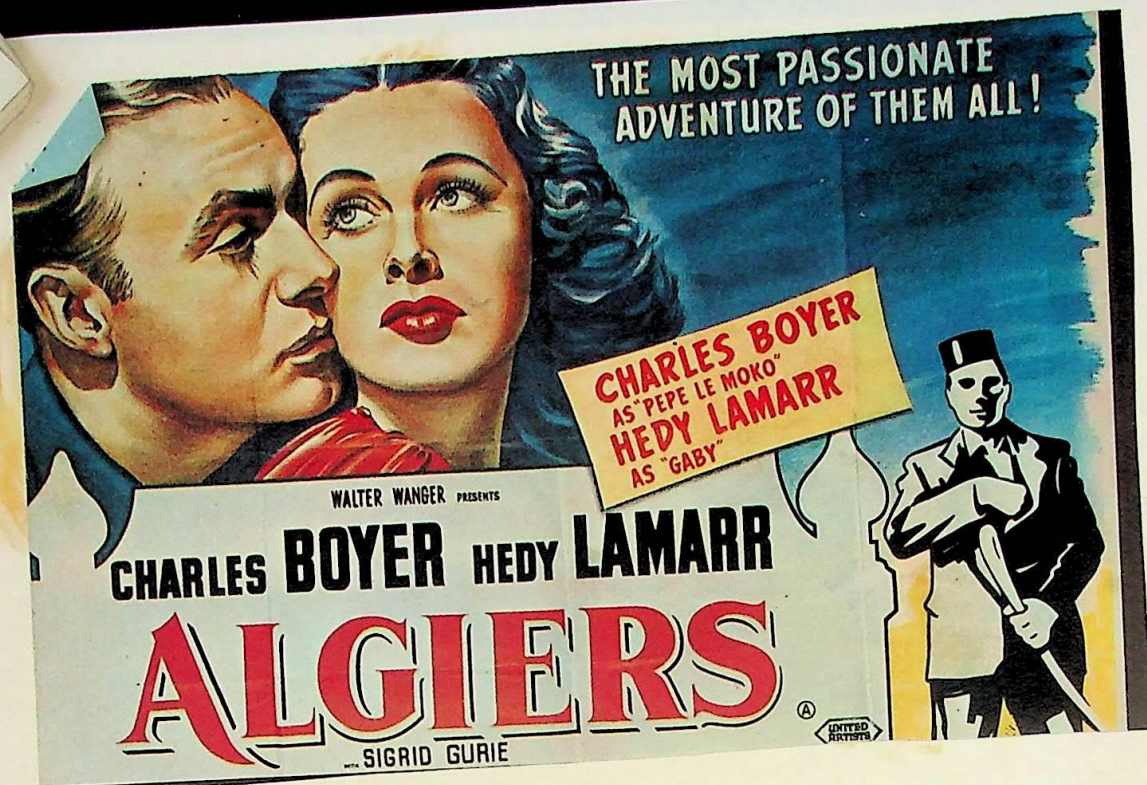
April

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Is Sex Slipping
in Pictures?

With Garbo
at Home



girl - the 'mechanical bride' as Marshall McLuhan named her twenty years ago, in his book about contemporary versions of that image. In Cherets time, women imitated the dress and style of his poster images. Today the imitation is carried even further. The point of the image in a commercial poster is to be attractive, often sexually attractive, thereby covertly identifying material success with sexual appetite and subliminally reinforcing the first by appealing to the second. Commercial advertising imagery cultivates the capacity to indulge in private desires by placing before the consumer a misconception of a way of life which could be attained through the purchasing of certain commodities.

POLITICS AND REVOLUTION:

It is surprising how late the political role of the poster followed the advertising role it fulfilled from its origins around 1870. Public notices continued to serve political functions, like calls to arms, throughout this period. An even closer precedent to the political poster had been flourishing since the early nineteenth century: the political cartoon. But despite these precedents, the poster remained largely innocent of any political function until 1914. Then almost overnight the newly belligerent governments of Europe, recognised the efficacy of the medium of commercial advertising for political purposes. The leading theme of the first political posters was patriotism. In France posters appealed to citizens to subscribe to the various war loans, in England posters exhorted men to join the army, in Germany, posters were more broadly ideological, arousing love of country by demonizing the enemy. Most posters done during World War I were graphically crude. Their emotional range moved between the pompous like Leete's poster of Lord Kitchener and his accusatory finger with the quotation "Your country needs YOU" (1914) and the hysterical, like Bernhards nightmare anti-Bolshevik poster. Advertising to come, was shown in the work of Charles Dana Gibson (creation of the 'Gibson Girl') and Howard Chandler Christy. Christy used the image of a girl, painted in fresh painterly brushstrokes, to encourage volunteers: 'Gee, I wish I were a man' says the girl in sailors uniform, standing to attention in a stiff breeze. With rare exceptions, such as the poster by Faivre (1916) urging contributions to the French war loan of that year under the slogan 'On les aura', the World War I posters have little interest now other than historical.

The birth of serious political graphics came right after 1918, when the new revolutionary movements convulsing Europe at the close of the war stimulated a vast outpouring of radical posters especially in Germany, Russia and Hungary. It was the aftermath of World War I that the political poster began to constitute a valuable branch of poster art. Most of the best work in the revolutionary poster was done by collectives of poster makers. Two of the earliest were the November Group formed in Berlin in 1918, which included as active artists the poet Mayakovsky, the Constructivist artist Ellissitsky, and Alexander Rodtjenko. More recent examples of revolutionary poster work produced by collectives, are the Republic and Communist posters made in Madrid and Barcelona in 1936-1937, and the posters turned out by revolutionary students at the Ecole des Beaux Art in Paris during the revolution of May 1968. Many individual artists have made radical poster art outside the discipline of a collective. Very distinguished work was done for the German Communist Party in the 1920's by John Heartfield and George Groz among others. Recently in 1968, the revolutionary poster was the subject of a large and impressive retrospective exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art in Stockholm.

The advent of political posters may seem like a sharp break with the original function of the poster. But the historical conditions which produced posters: first as commercial advertising, and later as political propaganda, are intertwined. If the commercial poster is an outgrowth of the capitalist economy, with its need to attract people to spend more money on non-essential goods and on spectacles, the political poster reflects another, specifically 19th and 20th century phenomenon, first articulated in the matrix of capitalism: the modern nation-state, whose claim to ideological monopoly has as its minimal, unquestioned expression, the goal of universal education and the power of mass mobilization for warfare.

Posters, obviously have a different destiny when they disseminate the official view in a country, as do the British recruiting posters of World War I, or the Cuban posters for OSPAAL and COR, than they have when they speak for an adversary minority within the country. Posters expressing the majority view of a politicized society are guaranteed mass distribution. Posters expressing insurgent, rather than establishment values get less widely distributed. They usually end up being defaced by irate members of the silent majority, or ripped off by the police.

The most significant development in the history of political posters, and one of the most important in the whole history of the medium, occurred in Russia in 1919. In September of that year, there appeared a new kind of poster, whose use is said to have been invented by Mikhail Cheremkh and was known in the beginning as the 'Satire window of the Russian Telegraph Agency' abbreviated to 'Rosta'. Slogans, instructions, poetry, were all in turn, boldly combined with graphic emblems and figuration usually in sequence. The new idiom of the revolutionary poster is apparent, as it has become apparent during the last few years in the posters from Cuba.

During the twenty nine months from September 1919 until February 1922, more than 1,600 different Rosta posters appeared in their windows, and in railway stations and other premises. The simple stencil-cut adaptability and team-work, used to produce these narrative posters, corresponded to the collective, creative work on the Agit-Prop' or Agitation- Instruction trains: in both cases, projection or diffusion of revolutionary propaganda by every available technique, was at the same time used to give a new semantic interpretation to an existing element of transition or transportation (window or railway train).

The new movement, which began in Russia in 1908 bound painter and poet together - they did not produce select, numbered de luxe editions, but cheap unlimited volumes which, today we must treat as popular art, despite their sophistication. In the phase of reconstruction the idiom of the poster captured attention; by its dynamism- it showed its affinity with the new typographic design of books and exhibitions, with architectural structures, theatre design, and with the techniques of the cinema.

The work of collective organisations in producing posters appeared again in Republican and Communist posters, in Madrid and Barcelona in 1936, during the Civil War in Spain. Posters during the Civil War demonstrated new techniques such as photomontage. The posters during the Second World War did not add anything to the achievements already established in the development of poster design generally. Since 1945 a significant change in world opinion about war, has caused a great deal of publicity to be given to anti-war posters e.g. Kathe Kollwitz poster 'No More War' or 'No More Hiroshimas' by Hirokatsu.

The Paris rising in May 1968 instigated the arrival of the poster as a young and virile medium, in the city of its origin. Once again, as in the production of the ROSTA posters of the Russian revolution a co-operative system of choosing designs, and printing them was shared by professionals as well as the inexperienced. The posters have the character of hastily prepared broadsheets; they brought back the feeling of urgency to a medium that for instant information had been superceded by radio and television. If coverage is not available on the complicated technical system of mass communications, then posters can have a strong effect - especially if they return to their primitive state instead of being the tasteful art works, to which the public have become accustomed. The posters of Paris 1968, had the direct impact of word and image: and the whole series maintains the traditions of good poster design - the popular design and the broadsheet from which the medium grew.

A revolutionary Communist society, which rejects the consumer society, must inevitably redefine and thereby limit, the use of posters. In this context only a selective and controlled use of posters makes sense. Nowhere is this selective use of posters more authentic than in Cuba, which by revolutionary aspiration (abetted by, but not just because of the cruel economic scarcities imposed by the American blockade) repudiated mercantile values more radically than any country outside Asia. Cuba obviously has no use for the commercial poster inspiring citizens to buy consumer goods. This still leaves a large place for the poster. Under revolutionary Communism, the poster remains one principal

type of public sign: decorating shared ideas and firing moral sympathies, rather than promoting private appetites.

The aesthetic self-sufficiency of the Cuban posters seems remarkable when one considers that the poster is itself a new art form in Cuba. Before the revolution the only posters to be seen in Cuba were the most vulgar types of American billboard advertising. Indeed many of the pre-1959 posters in Havana, had English texts, addressing themselves not even to the Cubans, but to the American tourists, whose dollars were a principle source of Cuba's earnings, and to the American residents, most of them businessmen who controlled and exploited Cuba's economy. The Cuban poster is not exclusively political. Many posters have no political content at all, and these include some of the most expensively and carefully produced posters - those done to advertise films. Many of these posters do not fill any practical need, in that the Cubans do not treat culture as an ensemble of commodities, and cultural events are attended to capacity in any event.

The medium of the poster, has been used effectively in Cuba in raising the political consciousness of the people and even exist as independant decorative objects. Posters also supply a set of visual commentaries on the main political events in the course of the year, they announce days of solidarity with foreign congresses, commemorate historical anniversaries etc. The Cuban posters are much less analytical than posters from the recent French revolution: they educate in a more indirect, emotional, graphically sensuous way.

Of course, the poster makers have an easier situation than some other artists in Cuba. They do not share in the burden inherited by literature, in which the pursuit of artistic excellence is partly defined in terms of a restriction of the audience. Literature in the centuries since it ceased to be a primarily oral and therefore public art, has become increasingly identified with a solitary act (reading), with a withdrawal into a private self. Good literature can, and often does appeal only to an educated minority. Good posters can not be an object of consumption by an elite. The space within which the genuine poster is shown is not an elitist but a public - communal - space. The Cuban poster artists remain very conscious that the poster is a public art, which addresses an undifferentiated mass of people, on behalf of something public.

In their beauty, their stylishness, and their transcendence of mere utility or mere propaganda, Cuban posters give evidence of a revolutionary society that is not repressive and philistine. The posters demonstrate that Cuba has a culture which is alive, international in orientation, and relatively free of the kind of bureaucratic interference that has blighted the arts in practically every other country where a communist revolution has come to power. In determining what a cultural revolution would mean for a given country one must take into particular account the available resources of the national past. Cultural revolution in China,

with its magnificent culture stretching back through millenia of history, must necessarily have different norms than a cultural revolution in Cuba. Apart from the strong survivals of Yoruba and other African tribal cultures, Cuba possesses only the bastardized remnants of the culture of oppressors - first the Spanish, then the Americans. The task of reconceiving art in a revolutionary society is a difficult one. One-sided options are condemned; pure utilitarianism as well as pure aestheticism, the frivolity of self-indulgence abstractness as well as the aesthetic poverty of realism. Every society in the throes of revolution puts a heavy demand on art, to have some connection with public values. The poster maker has no fundamental difficulty in acceding to this demand, posters being both an art form and also an extremely literal means of creating values. After the poster, the art form which seems almost as comfortable with this demand is the cinema. With other art forms, the situation is unequivocal, since culture is almost by definition bourgeois. Undoubtedly, there are many elements of the culture of bourgeois society that should be retained and incorporated into a revolutionary society, but that society must also establish new, equally persuasive and complex forms of culture.

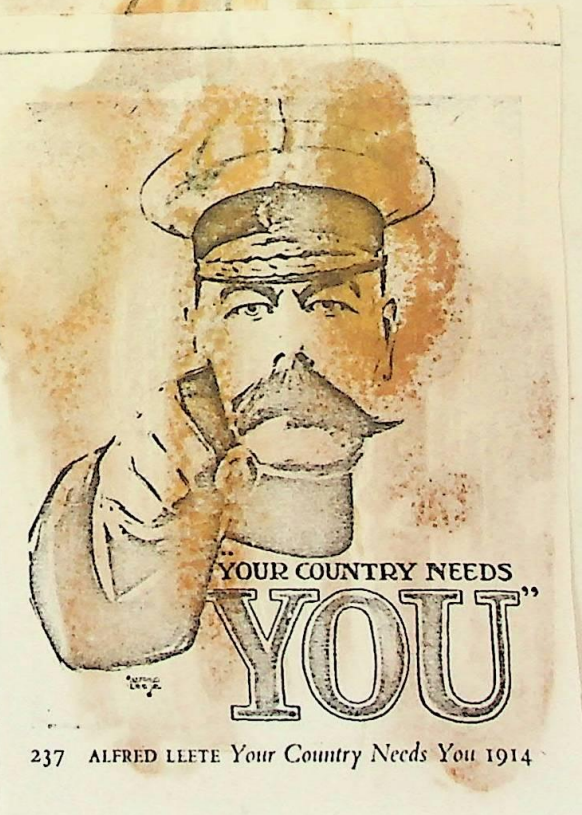
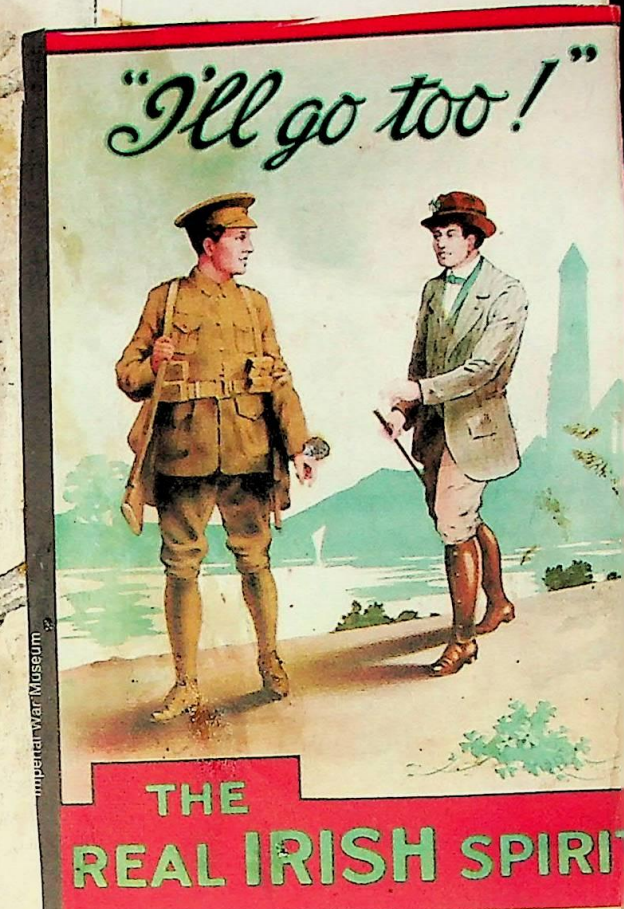
reference books

ART IN THE ONE-DIMENSIONAL SOCIETY :
THE WARHOL GENERATION :
THE CULTURAL POLITICS OF POP :
THE SOCIOLOGY OF ART :
THE INTERNATIONAL URBAN CRISES :
THE ART OF REVOLUTION :

HERBERT MARCUSE.
GREGORY BATTCKOCK.
ANDREAS HUYSEN.
JEAN DUVIGNAUD.
THOMAS L. TSAIR.
SUSAN SONTAG.



240 JULES-ABEL FAIVRE *On les aura!* 1916



237 ALFRED LLETE *Your Country Needs You* 1914



Above left: Communist organization, 'International Red Aid', appeals for money for victims of 'proletarian class struggle'. 'Don't forget us', cries imprisoned Communist. Above right: Election poster. German Democratic Party claims it will send inflation up in smoke



Top: Spartacist poster. A Red fist crashes down on the National Assembly. A 'vote' for the Spartacists endorsed the destruction of the Weimar Constitution. Above: An election poster of the German People's Party promises liberation from the shackles of communism

Below: Right-wing propaganda poster equates the Jew with degenerate modern art and pornography. 'Foreign slave' blares his praises

